



United States Department of Agriculture

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS  
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE  
[www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov)

*"Solving Problems for the Growing World"*

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Announcement Number:** ARS-X5W-0325  
Demo/Alternative Merit  
Promotion

**Position Title/Series/Grade:**  
Research Animal Scientist  
GS-0487-12/13/14 **OR**  
Rangeland Scientist  
GS-0454-12/13/14

**Employment Type:** Full-time - Permanent

**Grade and Salary Range:**  
GS-12 \$60,576.00 - \$78,745.00 Per Year  
GS-13 \$72,035.00 - \$93,643.00 Per Year  
GS-14 \$85,123.00 - \$110,662.00 Per Year

**Location of Position:**  
Range Sheep Production Efficiency Research  
Dubois, ID

**Who Can Apply** (You **must** include a statement in your application that you are a U.S. citizen to be considered for this position): All U.S. Citizens

**Opening Date:** June 27, 2005

**Closing Date:** August 29, 2005

For copies of vacancy announcements and/or application materials, please call (301) 504-1482. For additional information regarding employment opportunities, please visit <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/jobs/apply.htm>.

**Contact Information**

**Human Resources Specialist:**  
Cindy Prucha  
(301) 504-1581

**Location Contact Information:**  
Sharon Weller  
(208) 374-5409

**DC Relay Service:** (202) 855-1234 (TDD)

**Send Applications to:**  
USDA, Agricultural Research Service  
Human Resources Division  
Attn: ARS-X5W-0325  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5106  
Beltsville, MD 20705-5106  
**Fax:** (301) 504-1535  
**E-mail:** [scirecruit@ars.usda.gov](mailto:scirecruit@ars.usda.gov)

Applications must be postmarked, e-mailed or faxed by the closing date of the announcement. Applications received in Government envelopes will not be considered.

Please take advantage of the Application Package Checklist at the end of this announcement to ensure your application is complete.

For information about the organization and location, visit the location's website at [http://www.ars.usda.gov/main/site\\_main.htm?modecode=53-64-00-00](http://www.ars.usda.gov/main/site_main.htm?modecode=53-64-00-00).

**Applications will also be accepted from USDA Surplus and Federal Displaced Employees in the commuting area.**

## **Major Duties:**

Serves as a member of a scientific research team with the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station in Dubois, Idaho. Conducts sheep research aimed at understanding interactions among grazing, nutrient utilization, plant population density and community dynamics, and wildlife habitat that lead to technologies and systems that improve production efficiency and rangeland ecosystems. Works collaboratively with other research scientists and related industry representatives. Specific research is directed toward developing more science-based grazing strategies and systems that are ecologically and economically viable; define the impact of sheep grazing on rangeland ecosystem and the productivity of sheep; and ultimately develop grazing management strategies and systems that are based on nutrient composition of range plants and the reduction of the impact of invasive weeds on rangeland ecosystems. Research results will be disseminated at scientific meetings and in peer-reviewed scientific publications.

**Qualifications Required:** Your education and experience will be evaluated against all qualification requirements (basic and any additional requirements) listed below.

### **Basic Requirements**

All candidates must have one year of specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade level in the Federal service. A Ph.D. or equivalent doctoral degree that has provided the specialized experience may be substituted for the experience requirement at the GS-12 level. Candidates for the GS-13 and GS-14 grade levels must also have demonstrated the ability to plan, coordinate and provide guidance for complex research projects. Additionally, the following education must be met to be basically eligible: **Rangeland Scientist, GS-0454**: a degree in range management or a related scientific discipline that included at least 42 semester hours in a combination of the plant, animal, and soil sciences and natural resources management as follows: 18 semester hours of course work in range management, including courses in areas such as basic principles of range management, range plants, range ecology, range inventories and studies, range improvements, and ranch or rangeland planning; 15 semester hours of directly related courses in the plant, animal and soil sciences, including at least one course in each of these three scientific areas, i.e. plant, animal and soil sciences. Courses in such areas as plant taxonomy, plant physiology, plant ecology, animal nutrition, livestock production, and soil morphology or soil classification are acceptable; and 9 semester hours of course work in related resource management subjects, including courses in such areas as wildlife management, watershed management, natural resource or agricultural economics, forestry, agronomy, forages, and outdoor recreation management **OR** **Research Animal Scientist, GS-0487**: a degree in a related discipline of animal science that included at least 30 semester hours in the basic biological and agricultural sciences, of which at least 20 semester hours were in animal science. At least 10 of the 20 required hours must have been in courses dealing with the breeding, feeding, production, and management of livestock, and the care and preparation of their products.

**This position has a positive education requirement. You must provide a copy of your academic transcripts OR a list of college courses with credit hours, dates completed, and grades received to verify education when applying for this position. If this information is not provided, your education may not be appropriately evaluated, and you may lose consideration for this position. If you are selected for this position, you will have to provide an official copy of your transcripts prior to entering on duty.**

**Time-In-Grade Restrictions apply for all candidates considered under Merit Promotion/Alternative Merit Promotion.**

**Specialized Experience** - experience which has equipped you with the following Knowledge, Skills and Abilities - 'KSAs' required to perform the duties of this position:

- (1) Ability to apply research theories and methods to collect information concerning the interactions among sheep grazing, nutrient utilization, plant population density and rangeland or grassland ecosystems;
- (2) Ability to conduct research using experimental design, procedures, techniques, and statistical analyses;
- (3) Ability to define the impact of animal grazing on ecosystems processes and the productivity of the animals; and
- (4) Ability to publish written results in peer reviewed scientific journals.

**Selective Placement Factor(s)** - In order to be considered minimally qualified, you must also possess the following:

1. Ability to develop grazing management strategies and systems that are based on the nutrient composition of range plants (both native and invasive).

**To be considered for a research scientist position, you must submit a one-page abstract of your MS thesis and/or PH.D. dissertation. Also submit a list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with your stature, contributions, recognition; any honors or awards received; memberships in professional or honor societies; invitations to make presentations at scientific/technical meetings; scientific society office and committee assignments; presentations (other than invitation); and publications.**

**Vacant research positions may be filled at one of several grade levels depending upon the scientific impact of the person selected. A peer review may be required to determine the appropriate grade level of the position and supplemental materials may be required from the selectee.**

**Research scientists have open-ended promotion potential. Research accomplishments and their impact on the duties and responsibilities of positions are evaluated periodically. The grade level is limited only by the individual's demonstrated ability to perform research of recognized importance to science and technology. \*Final grade level may be determined by a peer review panel.**

## **Other Important Information**

### **Benefits Package:**

A Benefits Package is authorized for this position. Additional information about Federal benefits can be obtained at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/ei61.asp> .

### **Veteran's Preference:**

For further details, call the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 703-724-1850 or TDD 978-461-8404. Select General Information on the Federal Employment Policies and Procedures, and then Veterans Preference and Special Appointing Authorities for Veterans. Visit their VetGuide website at <http://www.opm.gov/veterans/html/vetguide.asp> .

### **Relocation Expenses:**

Payment of relocation expenses will be determined in accordance with P&P 412.5, Recruitment and Retention Incentives and Other Special Pay, Sections 6 and 7, as amended by Bulletins 03-402 and 05-

412.5, which may be found at <http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/412-05.htm#H10>. See also [http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing\\_recruit/reloweb.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/staffing_recruit/reloweb.htm) .

**Financial Disclosure Requirement:**

Federal employees are subject to prohibitions against officially dealing with outside organizations in which they have a financial interest. You may be required to submit a financial disclosure report if hired for this position.

**False statements:**

If you make a false statement in any part of your application, you may not be hired; may be fired after beginning work; or may be fined or jailed.

**Optional Form 306, (Declaration for Federal Employment):**

If you are selected for this position, you will be required to complete this form before an offer may be made.

**USDA Surplus/Federal Displaced Employees:**

USDA Surplus/Federal displaced employees must submit documentary evidence of eligibility. Well qualified surplus and displaced employees within the local commuting area will receive selection priority as provided by OPM regulations. Well-qualified means the applicant meets the basic qualification and eligibility requirements and all selective placement factors; is rated above minimally qualified against the KSAs or quality criteria; and is able to perform satisfactorily the duties of the position upon entry. Applicants must submit the following:

- 1) a copy of your RIF Separation Notice or Certification of Expected Separation or other documentation indicating that you are a surplus employee;
- 2) evidence of full performance level of current position;
- 3) a copy of your most recent performance appraisal; and
- 4) a copy of your most recent SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, to verify reassignment eligibility.

**Selective Service System:**

Males over age 18 who were born after December 31, 1959, must have registered with the Selective Service System (or have an exemption) to be eligible for Federal employment.

**Status Applicants:**

All status candidates who wish to be considered under both alternative merit promotion and non-status competitive examining must submit two (2) complete applications. When only one (1) application is received, it will be considered under the alternative merit promotion procedures if the applicant is a current or former Federal employee with reinstatement eligibility. All merit promotion principles remain in effect.

**Reasonable Accommodation:**

Reasonable accommodation may be provided to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, or have questions regarding reasonable accommodation and/or accessibility for any part of the application and hiring process, please contact the Disability Program Manager on 202-720-6161 or through the DC Relay Service on 202-855-1234 (TDD). The decision to grant reasonable accommodation is made on a case-by-case basis.

**Civil Rights Policy Statement:**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Discrimination is prohibited in all USDA programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Target Center on 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

**To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964 (voice and TDD).**

## Application Package Checklist

**If application packages do not contain all of the requested information, you may lose consideration for the job. To help you ensure your application fully outlines your qualifications and eligibility for this position, please submit the following documentation.**

- ☐ Optional Form 612 (Optional Application for Federal Employment), SF-171 (Application for Federal Employment), Resume, Curriculum Vitae, or other document outlining your qualifications (Go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to obtain the OF-612).

**The following information is required of all applicants:**

- ☐ Announcement number, title, and grade(s) of the position
- ☐ Full name, mailing address (including zip code) and day and evening phone numbers (with area code)
- ☐ Social security number
- ☐ Statement that you are a U.S. citizen (if not using the OF-612 or SF-171)
- ☐ Copy of DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) (if claiming veteran's preference) (Visit the following web site for additional information:  
<http://www.opm.gov/employ/veterans/html/vetguide.asp>)
- ☐ SF-15 (Application for 10-point Veteran's Preference) plus the support documentation required by this form (if claiming 10-point veterans preference) (Go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf.asp> to obtain form.)
- ☐ Paid and non-paid work experience related to the position. For each period of work experience include:
  - \_\_\_ Job title
  - \_\_\_ Series/grade (if Federal employment)
  - \_\_\_ Duties and accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Employer's name and address
  - \_\_\_ Supervisor's name and contact information
  - \_\_\_ Starting and ending dates of employment (at least month & year)
  - \_\_\_ Number of hours worked per week
  - \_\_\_ Salary
  - \_\_\_ Indicate if we may contact current supervisor/employer
- ☐ Other job related information, such as training courses (title & year); skills (e.g., other languages, computer software/hardware, tools, etc.)
  - \_\_\_ Certificates/licenses (current)
  - \_\_\_ Honors, awards, and special accomplishments
  - \_\_\_ Supplemental questionnaire if applicable (usually for Federal Wage System positions - WG, WL, WS)

- ☐ Copy of college transcripts (if qualifying all or in part on the basis of education for this position) (If you have non-conventional education, e.g., foreign study, continuing education units, life experience, etc., go to the web site at <http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/SEC-II/s2-e4.htm#e4a> and look under the heading “Other Education” for information governing acceptability of this type of education.)
- ☐ Copy of SF-50 (Notification of Personnel Action) to verify possession of competitive civil service status (if you are a current or previous federal employee)
- ☐ Copy of most recent performance appraisal (if you are a current federal employee)
- ☐ Second copy of application package (if the position is open to candidates outside the federal government AND if you are a current federal employee or a candidate with reinstatement eligibility and wish to be considered under both merit promotion and competitive examining procedures).
- ☐ Support documentation for eligibility for special hiring authorities, such as disability, Peace Corps service, etc. (If you have questions about whether you are eligible for a particular hiring authority, please call the servicing HR specialist or visit the web site at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a2.htm> and scroll down to the subject heading, “Category”.)
- ☐ Support documentation if you are a USDA surplus or federal displaced employee (See pertinent section under “Other Important Information” below.)
- ☐ Self-certification of typing speed (if required as a basic qualification for the position)
- ☐ While not required, a separate response to the required knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs listed under Specialized Experience) and Selective Placement Factor(s), if present, for this position may better highlight your specific qualifications for this position. (For an explanation of KSAs, go to the web site at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/careers/docs.htm?docid=1361> ).

**As an Applicant for a Research Scientist Position, you must also submit the following:**

A one-page abstract of MS thesis and/or Ph.D. dissertation

A resume of any honors or awards received; memberships in professional or honor societies; invitations to make presentations at scientific/technical meetings; scientific society office and committee assignments; presentations (other than invitations); and publications.

A list of names, addresses, and phone numbers of persons familiar with your stature, contributions, and recognition.

**If this is your first time applying for a federal job, or if you wish to view more detailed information about various aspects of applying for federal jobs, go to <http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/of.asp> and scroll down to access the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Optional Form 510.**